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ABSTRACT

The object of this study is to make a start toward determining the extent of duplicated information that is being acquired in spite of customary precautions to avoid it. Referring to a specific case, the percentages in Table II show the frequency of appearance in five other works of 19 items in Mitchell's "Encyclopedia of American Politics." While reference and information service was in its infancy, the main problem was to develop the tools to do the job and any overlapping of sources was of less concern. Now we can begin to see duplicated information rising with increasing distinctness as an ancillary problem that deserves more attention. Librarians have more money than time to evaluate individual purchases and do not stand back at purchasing duplicated information if a publisher packages it with significant new information. Publishers, library budgets and book collections would benefit if better guidelines for distinguishing justifiable from unjustifiable duplication were developed. To determine whether an attractive new package of information effectively rounds out, or materially duplicates, information already present in a sizable collection requires in-depth, expert attention that book-reviewing machinery is poorly organized to provide. More work needs to be done of the problem. This study is exploratory and the results are fragmentary. (NH)

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DUPLICATED INFORMATION ACQUIRED BY LIBRARIES

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DUPLICATED INFORMATION ACQUIRED BY LIBRARIES

Carl M. White

A cloakroom estimate has it that "when you buy a new reference book, you get about 10 per cent new information." If you try to pin down how much duplicated information libraries do in fact buy, you quickly discover that the literature contains but few hard facts on the subject. Kaser's review of the literature of acquisitions[1] contains no reference to the subject, and a search of library literature turns up nothing either. In a study of the coverage of geologic literature for 1961, H. E. Hawkes found that of 60 North American titles, 20 were reported either by GeoScience or the Bibliography of North American Geology; 18 were missed by both services; while 22 were reported by both services.[2] A University of Chicago study found bibliographical services in the social sciences to be "overlapping, duplicatory, incomplete, without clearly defined boundaries, and generally unsatisfactory."[3] That was in 1950. Bibliographical coverage has improved since then but duplication, unchecked, is greater than ever. Studies made so far are scattered; they contain sketchy but suggestive information, and tend to focus on duplication in works of a bibliographical nature.

This paper suggests that duplicated information is getting to be extensive enough to deserve closer attention.

The presentation will consist mostly of case studies. The cases were laid out (1) to obtain data on the degree to which information in widely-purchased reference works duplicates information elsewhere in the collection, especially in other reference works; (2) to clarify whether the sorts of information duplicated are few or numerous; and (3) to undertake no more than could be managed on a limited budget of staff time. It should be pointed out early that the study was made possible by the cooperation of Mel Voigt, UCSD Librarian; Gordon Fretwell, Head of Public Services; and three reference librarians -- Elizabeth McGraw, Donald McKie and Philip Smith. These three librarians have put us all

in their debt by sandwiching many hours of patient searching in between calls for service at the reference desk. What is more, they have done this without showing any sign of being exasperated by the conflicting claims that all these things have made on their time.

A working assumption used in setting up the project was that collection-builders would gain a reasonably dependable picture of the degree of duplication that is to be expected in a representative general collection of reference works by obtaining samples of duplicated information in the following categories: (1) information about publications -- i.e. duplicated bibliographical information; (2) definitions of words and phrases; (3) identification, location and related information about people, organizations and things; (4) connected accounts of current and recent affairs -- reports and periodic reviews of the news; (5) basic general information on problems and activities of government; (6) summaries of information expressed in statistical form; (7) summaries of information expressed mainly in graphic (non-verbal and non-mathematical) form.

The cases are arbitrarily limited to these categories and, by subject, are limited to the social sciences. If someone inquires why types of reference works are not listed in place of the seven topics just stated, it is because we seek insight into duplicated information wherever the collection provides it, so it is sorts of information that set the framework of the study. In everyday work, of course, we telescope a topic like 'Definitions of words and phrases' into the single word 'dictionary.' But we know when we do so that words like 'dictionary,' 'encyclopedia,' 'handbook,' etc., have picked up ambiguous meanings; that a 'dictionary,' so called, may not limit itself to defining words and phrases; that a dictionary is not the only place where definitions of words and phrases are to be found; and that other everyday names of classes of reference works are equally imprecise. The making of the point is enough to alert us to the problem and, having done this, we may now go ahead and use everyday terminology wherever it can be done without confusion. We turn now to the findings.

Bibliographical Information

The first five cases deal respectively with (1) the whereabouts of bibliographical information about periodicals and with the information content of specific works of reference; (2) Recent publications in the social and behavioral sciences: the ABS Guide 1966 supplement (N.Y., The American Behavioral Scientist, a division of Sage Publications, 1966); (3) ABS quarterly checklists (Darien, Conn., American Bibliographical Service); (4) American Economic Association, Index of economic journals 1886-1965 (Homewood, Ill., Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1961-1967, 7 vols.); and (5) Journal of economic abstracts (Cambridge, Harvard University, 1963-).

Table 1 shows the results of taking 15 periodicals, representing five countries of origin, and checking the information about them that is contained in 13 sources as follows: (1) Ayer and Son's Directory of newspapers and periodicals ("Ayer" for short in the Table); (2) British union-catalog of periodicals, a record of the periodicals of the world, from the seventeenth century to the present day, in British libraries (British UCP); (3) Deutsche presse; zeitungen und zeitschriften (Deutsche Pr.); (4) F. W. Faxon Co., Librarian's guide to periodicals (Faxon); (5) Guide to current British periodicals (Guide to CBP); (6) Newspaper press directory and advertisers' guide (Newspaper Pr.); (7) Annuaire de la presse française et étrangère et du monde politique; annuaire international de la presse (Presse Fr.); (8) Stamm (Der Leitfaden für presse und werbung); (9) Standard periodical directory (Standard); (10) Ulrich's periodical directory (Ulrich); (11) Union list of serials (Union list); (12) Willing's press guide (Willing); and (13) Willing's European press guide (Willing: European).

The ordinate shows that these 13 sources provided up to 7 listings of a single title. The abscissa shows up to 100 per cent coverage of individual periodicals in the sample. Four of the lists have international coverage. National lists conform to coverage plans of their own, but there is no uniformity as to plan from one list to another, which tends to lead either to spotty coverage or to duplicated information to avoid it.

Table 1.
A sampling of locations where information about 15 periodicals can be found

	Ayer	British UCP	Deutsche Pr.	Faxon	Guide to CBP	Newspaper Pr.	Press Fr.	Stamm	Standard	Ulrich	Union List	Willing	Willing: European	No. of places listed
American Journal of International Law	x	x	no	x	no	no	no	no	x	x	x	no	no	6
Economic Geography	x	x	no	x	no	no	no	no	x	x	x	no	no	6
English Historical Review	no	x	no	x	x	x	no	no	no	x	x	x	no	7
Facts on File	x	x	no	x	no	no	no	no	x	x	x	no	no	6
Foreign Affairs	x	x	no	x	no	no	no	no	x	x	x	no	no	6
Fortune	x	x	no	x	no	no	no	no	x	x	x	no	no	6
Geographical Review	x	x	no	x	no	no	no	no	x	x	x	no	no	6
Harvard Business Review	x	x	no	x	no	no	no	no	x	x	x	no	no	6
Human Relations	no	x	no	x	x	no	no	no	x	x	x	x	no	7
International Affairs	no	x	no	x	x	x	no	no	no	x	x	x	no	7
International Social Science Journal	no	x	no	x	no	no	no	no	x	x	x	no	no	5
Journal of Educational Psychology	x	x	no	x	no	no	no	no	no	x	x	no	no	5
Oceania	no	x	no	x	no	no	no	no	no	x	x	no	no	4
Schmollers Jahrbuch...	no	x	x	x	no	no	no	x	no	x	x	no	x	7
Social Forces	no	x	no	x	no	no	no	no	x	x	x	no	no	5
No. of the 15 periodicals listed	8	15	1	15	3	2	0	1	10	15	15	3	1	

Table 2 gets down to content duplication. It uses 8 items as a basis of comparing the information supplied by these 13 sources. Two items are to be found in 3 of the sources; 6 items, in 10 to 13 of them.

Table 2.
Kinds of Information about periodicals supplied by 13 sources

	Ayer	British UCP	Deutsche Pr.	Faxon	Guide to CBP	Newspaper Pr.	Presse Fr.	Stamm	Standard	Ulrich	Union List	Willing	Willing: European	No. of places listed	%
Official Title	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	13	100
When publication commenced	x	x	x	no	x	x	x	no	x	x	x	x	x	11	84
Publisher	x	x	x	no	x	x	x	x	x	x	x*	x	x	12*	92*
Publisher's address	x	no	x	no	x	x	x	x	x	x	no	x	x	10	76
Frequency of publication	x	no	x	x	x	x	x	no	x	x	no	x	x	10	76
Index (annual) indicated	x	no	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	no	x	x	11	84
Indexed in other indexes	no	no	no	x	x	no	no	no	no	x	no	no	no	3	23
No. of these 8 items supplied	6	3	6	5	8	6	5	5	6	8	3*	6	6		

*With qualifications. Union list of serials and New serial titles give publisher irregularly

The procedure in this case was to take a problem -- the location of certain kinds of information about periodicals -- to check the procurability of the information in a selected list of reference works, and to summarize the results. Another procedure is to take a given reference work and check the extent to which the information is duplicated by other reference works or is unique (i.e. procurable from that source only). Both procedures are used in this study, the second more than the first.

The American Bibliographic Service of Darien, Connecticut, gets out more than a dozen near-print quarterly check-lists (with 125 to 500 current books and pamphlets an issue) in the humanities, physical sciences, mathematics and social sciences. Every fifth page of September, 1966, issues of two of these quarterly lists (Ethnology and sociology, $4 a year, and Economics and political science, $8.50) was Xeroxed, and from these, eight pages (having in all 124 titles) were selected to form a working sample. These titles were then checked against five selective bibliographies and one inclusive English-language bibliography, CBI. Table 3 shows that roughly three titles out of every four were found in one or

Table 3.
Multiple listing of 124 items in two ABS quarterly check-lists

a. No. listed by 6 other bibliographies:		
Cumulative book index	78	62%
International bibliography of economics	25	20%
International bibliography of sociology	23	18%
International bibliography of social and cultural anthropology	15	12%
International bibliography of political science	15	12%
Harmon, R. B. Political science: a bibliographical guide to the literature. Supplement, 1968.	11	8%
b. Of the 124 items		
No. found in one or more additional sources	96	77%
No. found in ABS Quarterly check-lists only	28	21%
Found in only 1 additional source	43	34%
Found in 2 additional sources	37	29%
" 3 "	13	10%
" 4 "	3	2%

more of the six lists. CBI alone accounts for 62 per cent. The ABS Quarterly check-lists reach libraries pretty late for book-selection purposes but justify their cost mainly on quality selection of international scope. (None of the series reviews, or annotates, the works listed). The low correlation between selections published in these two quarterly check-lists and their opposite numbers in the two fields raises doubts which collection-builders would find it useful to resolve. We need more published studies on matters of this sort to clarify why duplication is necessary in the first place and why, if we must have it, there is a lack of correlation at points where we would expect to find it. The 28 items not located in any of the six other lists included 12 works in German, 3 in English, and 13 in other languages. One of the German titles was a translation of Homan's The Human Group. Of the three English titles, two were reprints, one a paperback popularization.

"The social sciences struggle with less and less success," The ABS Guide to recent publications in the social sciences (N.Y., American Behavioral Scientist, 1965) states in the preface, "against the overwhelming waves of documents." The Guide and its annual supplements stepped in to help make "the bibliographic response" to this incoming tide more effective. The 1966 supplement ("ABS" in Table 4), which lists just under 1000 articles and books, forms the basis of one of the case studies of duplicated information. This supplement selectively lists and annotates articles from some 308 journals. The list at the front of the volume was checked against lists used by 10 other indexing and abstracting services (Economic abstracts, Education index, International political science abstracts, Journal of economic abstracts, Psychological abstracts, PAIS, Reader's guide, Sociological abstracts, Social science and humanities index, and International bibliography of sociology) to determine the amount of duplication if any. To obtain a more direct measure of uniqueness of content, a sample of 38 of the articles indexed was checked to determine whether they have been abstracted in any

of four abstracting services: International political science abstracts (IPSA), Journal of economic abstracts (JEA), Psychological abstracts (PA), and Sociological abstracts (SA).

Table 4 shows the extent of duplication. Only 56 of the 308 journals were not indexed or abstracted by at least one other source. Only 12 of the 38 articles were not abstracted in one of the four services used for checking purposes. No adequate check could be made of duplicated information about the books that are included in the list.

Table 4.
Multiple indexing and abstracting of 308 journals on the American Behavioral Scientist list

a. Total of the 308 indexed in	8	indexes in the sample (of 10)	4	1.2%
"	7	"	9	2.9%
"	6	"	23	7.4%
"	5	"	27	8.7%
"	4	"	57	18.5%
"	3	"	70	22.7%
"	2	"	62	20.1%
Of the 308 indexed, the no. indexed by the ABS only was			56	18.1%
b. Of a sample of 38 articles in these journals,		IPSA abstracted	7	18.4%
"		JEA "	1	2.6%
"		PA "	9	23.6%
"		SA "	19	50.0%
Of this sample of 38 articles, the no. annotated by ABS only was			12	31.5%

The Index of economic journals, prepared under the auspices of the American Economic Association, indexes by author and subject English language articles in major professional journals published during the years since 1886. The list of 90 journals indexed in volume 5, 1954-1959, was compared with lists indexed for the same period in PAIS, International bibliography of economics, International index, and Business periodicals index.

Table 5 shows that roughly a fourth of the journals are indexed in IEJ alone, with extensive duplication of the remaining 75 per cent. All of the small sample of articles checked were indexed in all of the four indexes checked (PAIS, International bibliography of economics, International index, and Business periodicals

index), but this result is explained by a biased choice of articles chosen from journals known to be at least partially indexed by all three. Accurate measurement of multiple indexing of articles would require adequate random sampling which there was not time for.

Table 5.
Multiple indexing of 90 economic journals

a. Total of the 90 journals indexed in 4 indexing services	11	12.2%
" 3 "	26	28.8%
" 2 "	32	35.5%
Total of the 90 indexed in the IEJ list only	21	23.3%
b. Of a sample of 10 articles in these journals, Int'l. Ind. indexed	10	100.0%
" IBE "	10	100.0%
Of this sample of 10 articles, the no. indexed in IEJ only was	0	0.0%

Table 6 is incomplete. It is based on an abstracting service -- Journal of economic abstracts, vol. 3, 1965. Adequate testing of duplication would necessitate checking, as was not possible under the circumstances, on the duplication of abstracts. We have an indirect check on this only: 29 of the journals on the JEA list are also covered by Economic abstracts. Table 6 is limited for the most part to a summary of less revealing information -- the extent to which the 35 journals are covered by the following indexing and abstracting services: Economic abstracts,

Table 6.
Multiple indexing and abstracting of 35 economic journals

a. Total of 35 journals indexed in 6 indexing and abstracting services	3	8.5%
" 5 "	7	20.0%
" 4 "	12	34.2%
" 3 "	8	22.8%
" 2 "	4	13.4%
" 1 "	1	2.8%
Total of the 35 journals in Journal of economic abstracts only	0	0.0%
Total of the 35 journals in JEA covered by Economic abstracts	29	82.8%
b. (Duplication of abstracts. Not available)		

Social sciences and humanities index, 1916- ; British humanities index, 1962- ; Internationale bibliographie der zeitschriftenliterature aus allen gebieten des wissens, 1963/64- ; Unesco's International bibliography of economics, and Index of economic journals.

Definitions of words and phrases

There was but one test made in this area, so we made it as representative as we could. One column on every tenth page of Charles Winick's Dictionary of anthropology was Xeroxed, and from the resultant collection of terms, 50 were chosen at random to serve as our sample. Four other reference works were then searched to see whether definitions of these terms could be found and to determine the comparability of the information, when any was located, with that in Winick. Table 7 shows extensive duplication. Only 8 terms were found in

Table 7.
Availability of definitions in other sources of 50 terms in Winick's Dictionary of Anthropology

	Number	Percent of 50
Webster's Third new international dictionary	39	78%
Encyclopaedia Britannica	31	62%
Zadrozny. Dictionary of social science	6	12%
International encyclopedia of the social sciences	2	4%
Winick's Dictionary of anthropology only	8	16%
Available in the 4 other sources	42	84%

Winick only. The greatest duplication was with Webster's Third new international dictionary. . .78 per cent. For this source, a check was made also of the relative completeness of definitions, with the following results:

Definitions more complete in Winick	6
Definitions more complete in Webster's Third	4
Definitions of comparable completeness in both	25
Comparison not valid	4

Information about institutions of higher learning

Social science literature cuts across the interest of workers in all fields,

as those who work with library resources in the area are aware. This catholicity of appeal is illustrated by across-the-board use of educational directories, of which we have several of high standard. What the public wants to know is of the most varied character, ranging from the history of an individual institution to the names of individual professors -- or the librarian. For purposes of checking duplication of published information, we set down several factors that affect an institution's performance; picked out half a dozen institutions of different sizes, with different programs, located in different sections*; and then searched

*Duke University, Fisk University, University of Hawaii, Mills College, Princeton University, University of the South.

Table 8.
Coverage of selected information about 6 colleges and universities by 5 representative directories

	World of learning 1968-69	American colleges and universities. 10th ed.	College blue book. 12th ed.	Cass. Comparative guide to American colleges 1968-69	Lovejoy's College guide
Standing (Accreditation)	0	6	0	6	6
Admission requirements	0	6	6	6	6
Basis of organization and government	0	6	6	6	6
Degree requirements	0	6	0	0	0
Degree structure	0	6	6	6	6
Enrollment	6	6	6	6	6
Teaching staff	6	6	0	0	6
Library facilities	4	5	4	5	5
Finances	0	6	0	0	5
Physical assets	0	6	0	0	5
Chief executive officer	6	6	0	0	6

five well-known directories for this information. Directories differ in the degree to which they bring out the student-teacher ratio, names of professors, size and strength of the faculty, etc.; but insofar as the sample is indicative, there is a strong tendency, as shown by the results summarized in Table 8, to duplicate information that is considered relevant to effective educational performance. Directory information turns up in many sources. For unexpected example, the Britannica Yearbook 1965 carries a directory (p. 306-13) of more than 1400 colleges and universities, giving 8 items of information about each one.

Reviews of current and recent affairs

Under the rubric of social science is to be found a huge collection of material that factually reports developments that have a bearing on the human condition one way or another. Newspapers and other daily reports form the base of the pyramid: these, along with TV and radio, are to the man in the street the channels of the news. But above this base are of course weeklies, monthlies, quarterlies and annuals which also form part of the system of rounding up the news of the times, the main difference being one of a longer time perspective. Not many years ago, the number of connected factual reviews for longer intervals was limited, but changing times and interests have multiplied them, and with the multiplication of sources has come a wider spread in quality of reporting.

Our findings are based on two samples. First, a random selection was made of subjects that periodic summaries might be expected to cover: (1) a resumé of developments in Canada, 1966; (2) NATO activities, 1966; (3) activities of the Organization of African Unity, 1966; (4) how the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) fared in Mexico's 1964 election; (5) civil-rights developments, 1966; (6) connected account of the December, 1966, crisis on publication of Manchester's Death of the president; and (7) necrology for 1966. Seven annuals were checked for the information and Table 9 shows that coverage ranged from 33 to 100 per cent. Coverage was not all of the same quality. News dictionary and World almanac,

Table 9.
Coverage of 7 subjects by selected annual reviews

Name of annual	No. of subjects covered	% of subjects covered
Americana annual	6	85
Annual register of world events	6	85
Britannica book of the year	4	57
News dictionary (Facts on file)	7	100
Die welt (Deutsches Institut fur Zeitgeschichte)	3	33
World almanac	4	57
World book of the year	6	85

for example, contained reliable factual information, but lacked the thoroughness of some of the other accounts. The topics that proved most elusive were, for different reasons, OAU activities, the PRI, and Death of the president.

A second test was of another kind. Information services of the sort that first served business and industry have multiplied since the war. One useful service in the political field is produced by Congressional Quarterly, Inc. The heart of it is a Weekly report of Congressional and political activity, cumulatively indexed by a Quarterly index followed by an Almanac published each Spring and covering the previous calendar year. In June, 1965, Congressional Quarterly published a remarkable volume, Congress and the nation, which takes an even longer time span and presents a factual summary of legislative and political developments for the 20 years, 1945-64. It was decided to find out how readily the information packed into Congress and the nation can be found elsewhere, and 11 items picked at random were used for the purpose:

Number of individual income tax returns in 1946 and 1963 (p.398)
Number of civilian employees who were part of the military establishment as of June 30, 1963, and estimated annual payroll (p.1578)
Glossary of terms (pt. 2, p.167a-74a)
Amount of economic aid given to Turkey, 1945-63 (p.170)
Summary of the Bay of Pigs disaster (p.127)
Measures taken to strengthen the U.S. information program (p.208-17)
Amount of money for aid to students in higher education, 1945-65 (p.1199)
Salary of the President of the USA in 1964 (p.1435)
Size of the Federal payroll for civilian employees, by year, 1946-64 (p.1473)
Name and directory information (including main interests) of principal civil rights groups (p.1634)
The amount of the public debt for ten years, 1955-64 (p.394)

The first three items on the above list were not found in any of the eight other sources checked. The last item, on the other hand, was found in six of them. The two central points that emerge from the comparison are brought out by Table 10. Insofar as our eight sources are representative, the information summa-

Table 10.
Availability of 11 items in Congress and the nation in selected reference works

	No. of items located	The only source for how many items
Statistical abstract	3	2
Facts on file	1	0
World almanac	3	0
Encyclopedia of associations	1	1
Information please almanac	3	1
Economic almanac	1	0
Statesman's yearbook	1	0
Historical statistics of the U.S.	2	1

rized in Congress and the nation is not widely duplicated. Next, the gamut of information is so wide (new summaries, statistics, directory information, etc.) that a handful of eight reference works can hardly be expected to provide an adequate test of duplication. For example, none of the eight works selected contain a glossary of terms, yet one needs go no farther than an unabridged Merriam-Webster to find adequate definitions of Calendar Wednesday, sine die, cloture, pocket veto, statutes at large, and other technical terms employed by the Congress -- and this is but one source for definition of terms.

General information on problems and activities of government

Edwin V. Mitchell's Encyclopedia of American politics (Greenwood Press, 1968) was published by Doubleday in 1946. Winchell (7th ed., L233) notes that it "includes brief articles on the presidents, states, parties, political terms and slogans, texts of important documents...." The reprinting of this 20-year-old work takes account of librarians' recognition of the value of handy compilations of

useful information.

Every tenth page in Mitchell was Xeroxed. Normally, one item on each Xeroxed page that contained one or more separate entry was searched, thus reducing our sample of 51 to a manageable total of 19. Five additional sources were searched to determine whether they included information on these 19 topics: (1) Smith and Zurcher, Dictionary of American politics, (2) McCarthy, Dictionary of American politics, (3) Safire, New language of politics, (4) Adams, Dictionary of American history, and (5) Encyclopedia Americana. Two of the Mitchell items were found in none of the 5: these were "Don't badger them," and "Innocuous desuetude." The remaining 17 turned up a total of 43 times, 3 items in 4 other places and 1 of them in all 5. Table 11 gives the breakdown by source. The investigator (short for

Table 11.
Frequency of appearance in 5 other works of 19 items in Mitchell's Encyclopedia of American politics

	No. of the 19 items located		Quality of the information		
			Lower	Comparable	Higher
Smith	12	(63%)	8	4	0
Americana	11	(58%)	4	3	4
Adams	11	(58%)	0	7	4
McCarthy	6	(31%)	4	1	1
Safire	3	(15%)	1	2	0
Total	43		17 (39%)	17 (39%)	9 (21%)

the reference librarian who made the search -- in this case Don McKie) estimated that 39 per cent (and a fraction) of the time the quality of the information found outside fell below that of Mitchell but was equal or superior to it 60 per cent (and a fraction) of the time. Safire seems to drag its feet by covering only 15 per cent of the items; but this is another way of saying that Mitchell is best for

pre-1946 material. The accent in Safire is on material more recent than that.

Librarians find it handy to work with a slender, well-printed 338-page volume and this one contains a great deal of well-chosen information when considered in isolation from other sources, but our necessarily small-scale comparison suggests that when considered in relation to these, its value is limited; and when it competes with 2 of the 5 (Americana and Adams), it seldom walks off with the prize.

Another handy volume in the same general area is Taylor's Encyclopedia of government officials, Federal and state, which was announced in 1967 as the first of "a unique series" of biennials. Drawing on successful experience with slick-paper school annuals, the Taylor Publishing Company portrays the organization of the several branches of government in human terms by listing the names and titles of key personalities and featuring pictures of those of first rank. In this sketchy sense, the volume seeks to be a "'who's who' of men and women who guide the [political] destiny of America." It packs related information on voting, on emblems, former presidents, vice presidents, etc., into 200 pages and succeeds in placing before the inquirer a picture as vivid and as pleasing to handle as the latest old-school annual.

But the volume's claim to uniqueness depends rather more on selection and

Table 12.
Availability of 21 items of information provided by
Taylor's Encyclopedia of government officials, Federal and state
in 8 other reference works

	Total of 21 items found	% of items found
Information please almanac	14	66
World almanac	12	57
Congressional directory	11	52
Statesman's yearbook	7	33
Washington '68 (Potomac Books Inc.)	7	33
Congressional staff directory	6	28
Kane. Facts about the presidents	5	24
U.S. Government organization manual	4	19

graphic presentation of lively material than on uniqueness as a source of the information itself, as Table 12 brings out. Not one of the 8 sources selected for comparison duplicates all of Taylor's several features, especially its superb pictures and charts, but the typical source provides about a third of the information. Insofar as the present sampling is fair, the most nearly unique information is that supplied by Taylor's on state legislators.

To help evaluate the comparison, something more needs to be said about the sampling process. Following are the features of Taylor's that were checked against the other 8 works: names, pictures and terms of office of presidents of the United States; names, pictures and terms of vice presidents; departments and independent establishments within the executive, their address and the name of the chief officer; names, addresses and personnel of Congressional committees; names and pictures of members of the Supreme Court; roster of U.S. Ambassadors and where they are located; names of governors of the several states; U.S. Congressmen; state legislators; political districts and voting records of the states.

Information presented in statistical and graphic form

From a potential sample of over 300 subjects, which turned up on Xeroxed pages of the Statistical abstract of the United States, 13 items were checked for duplication. Four were completely or nearly duplicated in sources other than the one from which the information had been abstracted in the first place; two were partially duplicated; and seven found in no other source checked. These results are interesting; statistical sources are numerous and are increasing; there is an undetermined amount of duplication among them; but staff limitations ruled out going into the subject in the depth necessary to offer a conclusive judgment about it.

Graphic treatments are common in the social sciences, and Norton Ginsburg's Atlas of economic development (University of Chicago Press, 1961) was picked as an example. Here, too, the study contents itself with describing unfinished work.

The Atlas relies on world data on gross national product, population, economic conditions, transportation facilities, energy consumption, etc., which are described in many sources. Sometimes the data are taken from obscure sources (R. M. Taylor, "International mail flows: a geographical analysis relating volume of mail to certain characteristics of postal countries," Ph. D., dissertation, Department of Geography, University of Washington; R. S. Platt, Nutrition in the British West Indies, London, H. M. S., 1946). Most of the data however are drawn from standard statistical works (yearbooks of the United Nations, FAO and other specialized agencies; Statistical abstract of the United States and its opposite number in other countries; etc.)

Most of us would agree that the duplication in both cases is justifiable, either because of the convenience of finding in one place so much material published in many sources (Statistical abstract) or because of the added informativeness of a comprehensive analysis of raw data when presented so effectively in graphic form (Ginsburg's Atlas).

Conclusions

1. We have used book funds to enrich our collections. To stretch them as far as possible, we have avoided duplication. We have done so by acquiring a minimum number of duplicates of the same title and by holding down on the purchase of certain types of material which, like textbooks, tend as a class to cover the same ground. The object of this study is to make a start toward determining the extent of duplicated information that is being acquired in spite of customary precautions to avoid it. Our samples are small, but if they are reliable the amount is considerable. To refer again to a specific case, the percentages in Table 11 show the frequency of appearance in 5 other works of 19 items in Mitchell's Encyclopedia of American politics, but who would suppose that these 5 works are the only ones in the average collection where information comparable to that in Mitchell is to be found?

2. More work needs to be done on the problem. This study is exploratory and the results are fragmentary. While reference and information service was in its infancy, the main problem was to develop the tools to do the job. Library schools and reference librarians were less concerned about any overlapping of sources, and rightly so, than about plugging gaps that would help them make this great public service come more fully into its own. The need of more and better tools has not passed, but somewhere along the way we have rounded a corner where we can begin to see duplicated information rising with increasing distinctness as an ancillary problem that deserves more attention than it required in the past.

3. The term 'rugged individualism' has gained acceptance as a way to refer to evils that are not inherent in private enterprise but are sometimes associated with it. For the publication of the more massive sources of information we depend both on commercial organizations and on professional organizations but on one more than the other. The evidence can be massed to say that an expanding library market has created more favorable investment opportunities; that commercially-minded publishers are 'working' this market more actively than in the past; that librarians have more money in their pockets than time to evaluate individual purchases and do not stand back at purchasing duplicated information if a publisher packages it with significant new information. It would be grossly unfair to say that publishers would go along with Cornelius Vanderbilt's dictum, "The public be damned," but neither can one say that all publishers have equal regard for the public interest. One hears more complaints of excessive commercialization of publishing today than one heard -- say -- before the war. Within the total community of information users and information specialists, collection-builders, more than most others, shoulder responsibility to speak up for the protection of the public from the type of rugged individualism which carelessly exploits libraries' needs for good reference works.

4. "Poor man," Benjamin Franklin said in a sentence that has become part of

everyday language, "you pay too much for your whistle." The Statistical abstract of the United States republishes information from many sources, but the added convenience justifies it. Ginsburg's Atlas republishes information from many sources, but the treatment supplements the information elsewhere. We consider that sort of duplication justifiable also. At the other end of a scale that is not clearly calibrated, there is duplication which obliges us to pay too much for our whistle. William James advised that when there is a contradiction, it is time to draw a distinction. Publishers, library budgets and book collections would benefit if we had better guidelines for distinguishing justifiable from unjustifiable duplication.

5. Meanwhile, what are we to do about acquiring duplicated information when it comes packaged that way? First, we need improved machinery for screening reference works. The movement to make greater use of literature specialists in collection-building assures us of progress along this line, but are we persuaded that this by itself is enough for the long haul ahead? In the field of cataloging, we have been slow to break away from a tradition that obliges each library to perform for an individual work, operations that hundreds of other libraries have to perform, but we know it is costlier that way and we are busy doing something about it. Is there perhaps a lesson in the experience for collection-builders? The act of determining whether an attractive new package of information effectively rounds out, or materially duplicates, information already present in a sizable collection requires in-depth, expert attention that our book-reviewing machinery is poorly organized to provide. It is a job certainly that is not done by publishers' blurbs. Nor is it completely done by the valuable current reports and reviews that we have on recent publications including those two indispensable aids, Choice and Booklist and subscription books bulletin. Second, we cannot beat the system -- even though we can hardly excuse ourselves from studying and revamping it. Our kit of reference tools is being improved. We have a chance to buy works

today that the founders of reference and information service would have given their eye-teeth for. We will buy them. After sizing them up as best we can in relation to the existing collection -- but we will buy them and be glad we can do so.

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